

THE BEACON



A PAPER FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
AND THE HOME



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ADORATION OF THE MAGI—*Albrecht Dürer.*

For The Beacon.

The Adoration of the Magi.

BY FRANCES M. DADMUN.

Soon after the birth of Jesus three kings rode into Bethlehem. When they heard how the child had been born in a manger,—all Bethlehem was talking about it,—they hurried to the stable with birthday gifts,—gold which was bright and shining, frankincense which had a pleasant fragrance, and myrrh which was bitter, but precious. It is said that this happened twelve days after

Jesus was born. In the calendar of certain churches the 6th of January is called Epiphany. The English also speak of it as "Twelfth Night," which Shakespeare used as a title for one of his dramas. Children in Italy receive their presents at Epiphany instead of on Christmas Day, as we do.

Albrecht, or Albert, Dürer lived in Germany four hundred years ago, and this was his first great painting. Whether or not he was familiar with traditional pictures of the "Adoration of Kings," he has treated the subject quite in his own way. The tall king with flowing hair is a portrait of Dürer him-

self, but he is a royal figure. The king who kneels before the baby is a kind old man who has not forgotten how to love a little child. How, indeed, could he help loving this baby with the beautiful head, who curls up his toes in his eagerness to get his hand inside the box? As for Mary, she is not a distant person, superior to other women, as the Madonna is sometimes painted, but a real mother, much pleased because her baby is receiving presents. After all, Dürer did well to paint her thus; for no woman is quite so beautiful as a mother with her child.

Dewey.

"Just one more story, dearies, and then you must run off to Mrs. Bedford's party and let the beautiful dream fairies tell you stories."

"O auntie, if it is the last, let it be a real, true story, will you?"

"Would you like a true story about a cat that I know?"

"Oh, yes, we love cats! What was his name?"

"His name was Dewey. He was a large gray cat and lived in a house at the seashore with some little boys and girls just about as big as you are. And they loved Dewey just as much as you love cats, and Dewey was never very far away from the children when they were building their pretty sand castles and running merry races on the soft warm sand."

"Sometimes it happened that the children ran into the house and shut the door so quickly that poor Dewey had not time to get in, and one day when he felt particularly miserable about being left out he curled himself up on the porch as if he were asleep, but, if you had taken a close look at him, you would have seen that his eyes were open and looked as though his little cat brains were busy thinking. After a little while he jumped up crying, 'Meow, meow,' as much as to say: 'I know how to get in. I shall do just what I have seen the children do.'

"Sure enough! The bell rang, and the children ran to the door to see who was coming; but, when they opened it, they were so disappointed to find that nobody was there and nobody was to be seen anywhere. But Dewey walked quietly in and rubbed against the children, as much as to say, 'I love to be with you and have you play with me,' and the children soon forgot their disappointment and ran off, with Dewey at their heels, to finish the games they had started."

"Several days after this the bell rang again, and, when the door was opened, no one was waiting to enter but Dewey. And again and again they were given the same surprise. Finally mamma said to the children that she had guessed who was ringing the bell. When she told them that she thought it was Dewey, the children had a good laugh over the idea of a cat ringing a door-bell; but mamma said, 'We will soon find out.'

"So she put Dewey out again on the porch and shut the door, and told the children to run quietly out the back door and around to the front of the house and hide where they could see Dewey without being seen by him. They were not there long before they saw Dewey working hard to get his paw over the bell-pull,—the old-fashioned kind which is pulled down and which is not often seen now,—and, when he at last got it over, it was easy enough to get the other paw over, and then let his whole weight swing on the bell-pull, pulling it down and making the bell ring, and, when he heard it ring, he let himself drop to the step and stood there waiting for the door to open—just as he had seen the children do.

"The children ran from their hiding-place with shouts of delight, and caught up Dewey and hugged him and petted him more than he had ever been hugged and petted before, and mamma quickly opened the door for Dewey and the delighted children. Then they ran to find papa and told him of the wonderful thing Dewey had done, and papa was so pleased that he declared the children

should give Dewey an extra saucer of milk for his supper that night."

"But tell us, auntie, did he really truly ring the bell?"

"Yes, dearies, he really truly did. I myself saw him do it one day when I was sitting on the porch, and after he had begged me in vain to open the door for him. Now, run off to bed, children, and perhaps some day I will tell you some more true stories about Dewey."—*E. M. Macferran, in Little Folks.*

The Frost King.

The Frost King is here, and his net-work is spread,
O'er moorland and mountain we follow his tread;

By jewels all glist'ning his footsteps we trace,
He has flung round the brown earth a mantle
of lace;

The eaves of the houses with crystals are hung

That flash back in beauty the glint of the sun.

The maple is shining with clear diamonds bright,

The hills and the valleys are gleaming and white;

The true-hearted snow-birds are perched by the way,

But scatter at times from the swift rushing sleigh;

The sounds from the village, how clearly they ring,

Oh! Gray-beard is monarch, old Frost is our king!

Selected.

For The Beacon.

Why Mother's Dinner tasted Good.

BY MAE FIELDER.

"Mother, why can't I go to the restaurant some time and buy my dinner same as Fred and Ralph do every single day? I'm tired of our dinners," and eight-year-old Harold looked quite injured.

"Let mother explain," said Mrs. Clayton, smiling. "You must remember, dear, that your brothers are at work and do not have time at noon to come home to dinner. You are my little schoolboy and have not yet stepped out into the busy world. There is time enough, laddie, before you have to eat restaurant dinners."

"But, mother, I want to, so much."

"Well, Harold," after a moment, "if you are a good boy from now until your birthday, which is just one week off, you may have twenty-five cents to spend for a birthday dinner at the café; but that will be your only present from me."

"Oh, that will be a dandy one. May I go alone?"

"Yes, I will trust you to go down town by yourself and order what you like."

"Oh, thank you, mother, you are just fine," and a boyish hug was given by way of emphasis.

In the week which followed Harold was a model boy, and on the morning of his birthday mother handed him a shining quarter of a dollar. He looked very nice in his Sunday suit of gray, and the blue tie matched his dancing eyes. "Good-bye, mother, I'll have to hurry," and the screen door closed with a snap.

It was exactly five minutes past twelve when Harold opened the door of the Round

Table Café and stepped within the long, rapidly filling room. The waiters were too busy to notice him, so he selected a seat at one of the tables and took up the bill of fare. What should he order? He had never even dreamed that there could be so many things for dinner. How did Ralph and Fred ever decide on anything? Meats, vegetables, pastry, and sweets, what an array! Perhaps he had better invest the twenty-five cents in date pudding, he was very fond of that. Then he became aware of approaching footsteps; and, looking up, he saw two pale-faced, poorly dressed children, a boy and a girl. They stopped at his table and took seats opposite.

A second later a waiter stepped up and demanded what they were doing there and ordered them to leave at once.

"I've got the mon, what's the fuss?" and the sharp black eyes of the boy gazed boldly into the waiter's face, while he spun a new quarter of a dollar on the table.

"Guess you stole that all right," said the waiter, who knew something of the wretched home life of the children where theft and kindred vices went hand in hand.

Harold at that moment put his hand into his pocket and then turned white. No, he did not faint, small boys never do; but he cried, "I've lost my money, my birthday money."

"How much was it, sonny?" asked the waiter.

"Twenty-five cents," with a sob.

"Oh, quit that, here's yer mon. Kit an' me saw yer pull it out with yer hand-chief when yer stopped to hear the band play. We don't want it. Come on, sis."

"Don't want to go, want some dinner," wailed the mite of a girl.

"We can't have such goings on," and the head waiter appeared.

"Please let them stay and have dinner with me," pleaded Harold.

"What is your name?" asked the waiter.
"Harold Clayton."

"Oh, all right: your father is Dr. Clayton. Well, behave yourselves, youngsters," turning to the boy and girl, "or out you go. Now what is your order, Master Clayton?"

"Do you like date pudding with lots of sauce?" asked Harold of his guests.

"Yep," returned the boy, while the little girl smiled her answer.

"Three date puddings at five cents apiece will be—will be"—hesitated Harold.

"Fifteen cents," helped the waiter.

"There'll be ten cents over. One vanilla ice-cream and three spoons, please," ordered Harold.

In a very short time the plates were cleared, and, as there was no longer any excuse for lingering at the table, Harold paid the bill, and, followed by the children, left the café.

"Come home with me," he said impulsively. "It isn't far, and mother will give you lots more to eat."

"Do yer mean it?" asked the boy suspiciously.

"Sure," returned Harold.

Just as Mrs. Clayton and the doctor were sitting down to dinner Harold burst in upon them crying, "We're nearly starved! Please, may we have something to eat?"

"Why, child, what do you mean?" asked his mother; but Dr. Clayton had caught sight of the shabby little figures outside the low window and arose to the occasion. "You have some guests, dear," he said as he opened the door and stepped out upon the piazza.

Places were soon found for them at the kitchen table, and good, wholesome food dispensed with a liberal hand.

"You've treated us white, an' we'll never forget it," said the boy when Harold bade him and his little sister good-bye.

"Son, I am glad you shared your good things with those less fortunate," said Dr. Clayton with a loving pat on the brown curls.

"That was why our home dinner tasted so nice, I 'spose," returned Harold, earnestly.

"Yes, dear, I think it was," said the doctor, with a smile.

The Sleepy-time.

Look, dear, the stars are blinking,
The sleepy moon is low,
The little winds among the leaves
Have all forgot to blow.
Come, dear, and say good-night!
God keep you all the night!

Good night! Gay words for waking,
Brave words for noon are best,
But loving words for the sleepy-time
When the moon is low in the west.
God keep you all the night!
Sweet dreams! Good-night! Good-night!

Young Days.

For The Beacon.

Our Red-coat Mystery.

BY "JAC" LOWELL.

Part II.

"Biking" is always great fun and real pleasure whenever there is a path of decent smoothness, and when the path is wide and remarkably smooth the fun and pleasure are multiplied many times.

Branton Road was a cycle path after a boy's own heart. In spite of our old, made-over wheels, we enjoyed every minute of our twilight rides, and before a week had passed we had put in so many hours of practice that most of us had become expert riders.

Chubby Jenks, still obliged to use the ancient high-wheeler, had little chance to become expert; but we favored him all we could, and now and then one of us would exchange wheels with him for an hour or so. We did not wish to have even one wholly backward member.

Reddy Howe was the first to secure an up-to-date machine. He found it at an auction sale over at Hallville, and took advantage of the bargain.

When he rode to our meeting place, coasting gracefully along, we all shouted; for we well knew that before the season ended there would be fifteen handsome, modern bicycles speeding over Branton Road. Little did we guess that there would be nearly that number that very evening.

"The days are getting shorter," said Ned Carter, as we started to pedal off. "It won't be long before we'll have to be thinking of getting some lanterns."

Ned was right, but we gave the matter only a second's thought and sped away.

How we did go that evening!

We had learned to ride together in two rows of seven abreast, with Chubby Jenks bringing up the rear. Now and then a rider in the front row would make a sudden spurt. No sooner had he done so than a rider in the back row would do likewise. A second later



AT CHURCH IN WINTER.

the other twelve riders would be making sudden spurts, the two leaders would be overtaken, and two even rows would go flying along again.

Branton Road stretches in a graceful curve from our own town, Bayville, to East Branton, five miles away. There are no sharp corners, no blind curves. It is just the road for youthful riders.

Our regular turning point was at the town line, just before the wide road drops down to East Branton's narrow village streets. At this point there is a grove of pines where we often dismounted for a short rest before starting back.

As we neared the grove on the night in question, we were surprised to see bright lights shining from the darkness.

"What are those lights?" questioned Billy Wales, as we slowed up.

"Giant fireflies," said I.

"Mosquitoes with search-lights," said Archie Blake.

"Hark, hear 'em buzz!" puffed Chubby Jenks.

By this time we had dismounted and clustered together, staring at the queer-looking red lights shining from the grove.

Sure enough, there was a sound of buzzing, like a crowd of people holding a whispered conversation.

"They're gypsies!" murmured Harry Beeman. Then, shouting aloud, "O you gypsies! Good evening!"

We didn't have time to be angry with Harry; for the whispers in the grove suddenly raised a wild yell, the lights began to move, and in less than a minute we had mounted our wheels and started off, pursued by twelve or more howling, shrieking cyclists on lantern-lighted wheels.

"I didn't guess that those were bike lamps," muttered Jim Bell, as he sped along.

"Neither did I, but that's what they are."

"And their riders can certainly speed some!" said Jim, glancing behind.

To be continued.

Five Resolutions.

Jonathan Edwards, who left a greater mark upon America than almost any other man among her earlier thinkers, made five resolutions for himself in his youth, and lived by them faithfully. To study them is to see one secret of his greatness. To adopt them will make any young soul nearer to greatness itself. They are as follows:

"1. Resolved: To live with all my might while I do live.

"2. Resolved: Never to lose one moment of time, but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can.

"3. Resolved: Never to do anything which I should despise or think meanly of in another.

"4. Resolved: Never to do anything out of revenge.

"5. Resolved: Never to do anything which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life."

Snowbound.

Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost line back with tropic heat;
And ever, when a louder blast
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
The merrier up its roaring draught
The great throat of the chimney laughed;
The house-dog on his paws outspread
Laid to the hearth his drowsy head,
The cat's dark silhouette on the wall
A couchant tiger's seemed to fall;
And, for the winter fireside meet,
Between the andiron's straddling feet,
The mug of cider simmered slow,
The apples sputtered in a row,
And close at hand the basket stood
With nuts from brown October's wood.

For The Beacon.

Sunshine and Sympathy.

Perhaps you have heard the story of the contest that the sun and the north wind once had. It is said that they had been disputing concerning their strength, each claiming to be stronger than the other. To settle the question they agreed to see which could take away the cloak from a man who was walking along a path near by.

First the wind tried. It blew as hard as it could upon the man; but, the harder it blew, the more firmly did the man wrap his cloak about him. At last the wind ceased its efforts, finding that it could not accomplish its purpose.

Then the sun tried. It just shone down with all its light and might upon the man. As the warm, gentle rays of the sunshine beamed upon him, he loosened his cloak more and more, and at last, finding the heat too great, he laid it aside. And so the sun proved that it was the stronger of the two.

It is a good story, and just as true as it can be. The fable expresses a fact, and a very great fact. If we learn it, we shall be very much stronger than we were before. It teaches us the very secret of the strength by which we can accomplish the greatest work. This secret is the strength of sympathy.

We often think of sympathy as simply being sorry for some one who has been unfortunate. We think of it as being shown in giving a dime to a crippled beggar on the street or sending a box of flowers to one who is sick. And all such acts do show our sympathy in the most real way.

But sympathy means more than that. It means having a spirit of love and good will toward all, whether they are our friends or not. It means that all the time we are wishing well to those about us, and treating them always as gently and as lovingly as we can. It means a spirit of love as wide and universal as the sunshine.

We give our love now to a few. Our friends always receive our sympathy. If a schoolmate is sick, we call every afternoon after school to see if there is any improvement. If a friend meets with a loss, we try in some way to help him bear it.

But sympathy should be like the sunshine. It should beam on all alike. When the sun shines, it shines both on the beautiful and the ugly. Wherever there is a chance for it to penetrate, in goes a radiant ray. It is only where every door is locked against it that it does not enter.

And sympathy, real sympathy, goes to all. It goes out to the beautiful and to the ugly also. It goes out to the schoolmate and to the one who spites us as well. It beams no more fully or gladly upon the friend than it does upon the one whom we call our foe. It is as wide as it is warm.

If the Christmas season has not given to each one of us a wider sympathy, then we have not properly observed it, however good a time we may have had. For the very heart of the Christmas time is the spirit of sympathy and good will that is as wide as life itself.

Then sympathy is the strongest force in the world. Its gentleness is more powerful than all else. It will make people do what no other force could compel them to do. It has an influence that can conquer and overcome all opposition.

Most of us, like the north wind, think that we can accomplish great things by our

might. But we find, as it did, that, when we scold or threaten or seek to compel, we only make matters worse. People only wrap their faults more tightly about them when we seek to take them away by force.

But always we can love people into better things. Our sympathy is always stronger than our scolding. Tenderness is better than any threatening. So let us beam the sunshine of our sympathy upon all, so that every one will be helped by it into larger and better and happier life.

QUESTION BOX.

What constitutes "absence" from the Sunday school?

This question was prompted by the request of a class that did not want its record broken, that one of its members should be counted "present" who had chosen to visit another school in the same village on a given Sunday. To grant this request would falsify records and endanger good order. Many schools agree to regard a pupil as "present" who, being out of town over a Sunday, attends a school in the place where he happens to be, and who brings a certificate of such attendance to his home school. That seems to be about as far as the word "present" can be strained.

The desire of a class to preserve its record of attendance is to be commended and encouraged, but not to the extent of playing fast and loose with facts. It would be safer to recognize only "present" and "absent" and mark the absences as excused or otherwise. Precisely how excused absences shall be counted in securing recognition for attendance should be carefully prearranged, so the pupils may know exactly what to expect. Even so small matters as these teach good morals or the reverse.

Why can we not buy books of all kinds, and especially Christmas and Easter cards and booklets at the Boston headquarters, as heretofore?

Because we cannot afford to carry on the business. An expert accountant last May showed that the Society was losing several hundred dollars a year in keeping a bookstore. As selling books, other than those devoted to religious education, is not legitimate Sunday-school work, we felt that we had no moral right to take money from offerings of schools, churches, and individuals for such use. The American Unitarian Association gave up that business several years ago for similar reasons. We sell our own publications and those of the Association. Other books, cards, etc., can be purchased at many places in every city and town. The rule of the Sunday School Society is now that no business shall be conducted at headquarters except what directly promotes the cause of our Sunday schools.

One of the neighbors who was visiting the home of little Dunnick, aged three, said, "Dunnick, I want you to go along home with me, and how long will you stay?" Dunnick put up four fat fingers, saying, "I will stay these many days, and go home on my thumb."

Thank God for life, then use it for the highest purposes.

RECREATION CORNER.

HUMBOLDT, IA.

Dear Editor,—I am teaching in a country school five miles from here. I took out *The Beacon* of November 27, and my pupils enjoyed the puzzle "Nuts to Crack" very much and wanted to have me send in the answers. Will have them try more of the puzzles as they are published, and perhaps they will send in some puzzles to be published.

Very truly yours,
GERTRUDE H. TAFT.

ENIGMA XVI.

I am composed of 13 letters.
My 6, 7, 9, 8, 10, is something to wear.
My 3, 9, 6, is in the air.
My 2, 12, 13, is something squirrels eat.
My 4, 5, 3, 7, 13, is what comes from a lamp.
My 13, 5, 13, 4, 1, is what we give a story.
My 2, 9, 11, is a girl's name,
My whole is a fruit.

GRACE CROCKETT.

MORE PINS.

I think I may say that I ken pins;
I once knew a whole set of — — pins.
Strange fortune, at times, fate will bring pins;
Why, some had been set up as — — pins.
The laundress, who says that she loathes pins
Is always demanding more — — pins.
The cook has a very cajoling pin;
Fine pastry she makes with her — — pins.

The teamster declares some folks pinch pins,
For lately he lost two good — — — pins.
The boatman, too, uses some droll pins;
He claims that his boat needs new — — — pins.

And here come the campers, with bent pins,
To look for a set of good — — — pins."

Selected.

PUZZLE.

A fascinating game.
A large river in United States.
To work with a needle.
To receive.
A burning fluid.
Used by carpenters.

Words of three or four letters each, the initials and
finals of which spell two large cities of Massachusetts.
ELLEN A. CALL.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 13.

ENIGMA XIV.—Saint Andrew's College.

HIDDEN NAMES.—1. Ruth. 2. May. 3. Nell.
4. Alice. 5. Grace. 6. Doris. 7. Stella. 8. Nora.
9. Rose and Beth. 10. Susan. 11. Kate.

DECAPITATIONS.—Plate, late, ate.

We have quite a list of names of correspondents to report this week: Gertrude H. Taft, Humboldt, Ia.; Ossian Warren Goodwin, Beatrice Goodwin, Newton Centre, Mass.; Julia M. Proctor, Northfield, Mass.; Brooks Hileman, Loda, Ill.; Ruby D. Crockett, Hubbardston, Mass.; Richard D. Gates, Gertrude H. Gates, Toronto, Canada; Charlotte Pardee, Bolton, Mass.; Melba L. Moore, Springfield, Mass.

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